



## Family with Service Needs

**Categories :** [Children and Families](#), [Legal and Protective Services](#), [Mental Health Care](#), [Youth and Young Adults](#)

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The following is summarized from the Connecticut Department of Children and Families Policy Manual, Courts: 46-3-31.

### What is a Family with Service Needs?

“Family With Service Needs” (FWSN) offenses involve a child (under 17) who:

- has without just cause run away from his parental home
- is beyond the control of his/her parents, grandparents, or guardians
- has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct
- has been truant from school or while in school has been continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulations
- is thirteen years old, or older, and has engaged in sexual intercourse with another person who is thirteen years old, or older, and is not more than two years younger or two years older than the first person.

The Family With Service Needs legislation was based on the principle that the family as well as the child must be involved in services in order to effectively deal with the child’s problematic behavior.

### Who May File a Written Complaint

Any of the following individuals who believes a child’s behaviors (as listed above) are such that his/her family is a “Family With Service Needs” may file a written complaint setting forth those facts with the Superior Court for Juvenile Matters which has venue over that matter:

- Selectman, Town Manager, Police Officer or social services department of any town or city
- Superintendent of Schools or Probation Officer
- Commissioner of DCF
- Any child caring institution, agency or youth service bureau approved or licensed by the Commissioner of DCF
- A parent or foster parent of a child
- A child or his representative or attorney

### What Services May Be Provided?

When a court acts in a case of a Family With Service Needs, these are the options the court can choose:

- Issue a warning and send the child home with parents/guardians
- Refer the child to DCF for voluntary services, or if FWSN is solely the result of truancy, to the local school district
- Commit the child to the care and custody, but not the guardianship, of the Commissioner of DCF for a period not to exceed eighteen months, for placement in foster care or any licensed facility other than the Connecticut Juvenile Training School
- Order a child to remain in the home or in the custody of any other suitable person under the rules of the court and supervision of a probation officer, or



- Vest temporary custody of the child in a suitable person or agency pending a temporary custody hearing.

**To Find Providers in Connecticut's Community Resources Database:**

- Search by program name: [Family With Service Needs](#)

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*SOURCES: Department of Children and Families Policy Manual, Superior Court For Juvenile Matters 46-3-31*  
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